

4 THE
DEAN OF GLOUCESTER'S
SPEECH

IN THE *Chetwood (K)*

Lower House *K.*

OF
CONVOCAATION,

On *Friday May 20.* 1715.

Against the Late

R I O T S.

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DEPARTMENT

OF THE

STATE



A
SPEECH, &c.

HERE being no particular Business appointed for this Day's Session, I take Leave to lay before You, my plain Thoughts in a Matter which seems to concern us in General : Submitting them intirely to the Judgment of this venerable Synod.

Passing thro' *Westminster Hall* this Morning, a Pamphlet was put into my Hand, with this Title, *The Necessity of a Regulati-*

on of the Pulpit and Press. As to the Latter, the *Licentiousness* of it, is grown to such a Pitch, that it may be thought to have done as much Mischief to Religion of late, as it did Service in the beginning of the Reformation.

As for the other, I am persuaded that no one here, and I hope none of our Brethren without, has been so indiscreet, or presumptuous, as to give just Reason for such an Accusation.

The Church of *England* has always look'd upon her Obedience, according to the Laws, to be one of her brightest and distinguishing Characters. Some of our Writers have been blam'd
for

for carrying it too far, in the Heat of Dispute, to the Prejudice of our good Constitution, which ought to be Sacred to us, and weakning the Foundation of our happy Establishment.

To determine the *Quà* and *Quatenus* in any Subject, with the utmost Præcision and Exactness, is said by a wise Writer of Antiquity, to be a very difficult Task ; but to do it in Moral and Political Subjects (and that we are forbid to treat of the Latter, I look upon as a very *gracious Indulgence*, not a *severe Injunction*) is by Reason of the endless Variety of Circumstances, almost impossible. Communities as well as Particulars, in extream Danger and Necessity,

cessity, act by meer Principles of Nature, and Instinct, not of Reason and mature Consideration, to direct Men in such a Condition is as absurd, as gravely to advise a Man that is stark Mad, and Raving in a Malignant Fever, how he should behave himself, or what Subject he should think upon.

But as such Speculations are, at least at this Time, needless and impertinent, the pressing upon our People, the Duty of Obedience to Superiors, is an indispensable Duty upon us of the Clergy: And there are those who blame us for not doing it with more than ordinary Diligence and Application, at this Time. More Riots have been committed, without any the slightest

est Colour of Reason, in a short time, than perhaps any Person in this Assembly can remember. The giddy Populace rises like a Spring Tide (and both seem to be influenc'd by the same Planet) to a strange height, threatens and overflows Cities, and some Countries, commits a Thousand Insolencies. Nor should I speak of this here, were it not that I hear, whilst they do this, that they pretend to be the Friends of the Religion by Law Establish'd. Those who dissent from us, disclaim them, I dare say none of our Communion will in the least Degree Countenance them. They say they are our Friends, but I fear these mistaken poor People are secretly
set

set on by our implacable Adversaries. We have a King of our own Communion, he has given us such strong Assurances, so convincing Proofs of his Favour, that if any one of us, should distrust, he deserves to forfeit them. We have no need of these Auxiliaries; if we had, it is directly against our Principles to make use of such unlawful Methods.

It may be said, that the Secular Power will punish such Disorders: No doubt of it, so they will *punish* Theft, Murder and Adultery; but it is a Duty incumbent on us to *prevent* them, to the utmost of our Power. St. Paul orders *Titus* to put the *Cretans* (who were *Islanders*, and the Safety of their Situation

tion from Foreign Dangers, made them more inclin'd to Civil Divisions) *to put them in Mind* (forgetful enough of themselves) *that they be Subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates.* For the Majesty of the Prince is violated, in the Affront of the meanest Person who acts by his Authority. The Maiming of a Statue of a Roman Emperor was punish'd with Death. This was the Crime of *Antioch* and *Theffalonica* (and those great Cities had like to have been ruin'd for it.) To asperse and abuse his *Living Images*, is a Crime of a much higher Nature. And yet some in the most eminent Stations might have found better Quarter in
B
France,

France, which they have brought so low, from so formidable a Power, than from some People in their Native Country, which they have so faithfully serv'd, and even in the Capital City itself.

The King most certainly observes our Behaviour, if we do not exert ourselves to the utmost for his Service, and the Tranquillity of his Reign, we should be very Sanguin, or confident, if we pretend to an eminent Degree in his Favour.

The first Impressions are of longest Continuance, especially with the Great.

I move therefore, that we consult of the most effectual Methods for reclaiming these deluded People, and repressing their Violences, and pray the Assistance, and Authority of the Upper House. That we warn Parents, and Masters of Families, as well as others, of the dreadful Consequences of such Tumults, both in Respect to this World, and the other. This was the Conduct of *St. Chrysostom*, and the Subject of his eloquent Orations on the like Occasion: It had very good effect there, and your lively Remonstrances from the Pulpit, and if occasion require, *from House to House*, will not fail, by God's Blessing, of Success here. If it should not, which I cannot imagine, at least

least we shall acquit ourselves
 before our most Gracious Sovereign
 recommend our selves to the reason-
 able Part of Mankind; and, which
 is above all, satisfy our own Con-
 sciences.

